1: Gillin E-5 (1932-33) 1936 SR9 Carib SR9

SOCIOLOGY OF THE CARIBS

In order to understand the community life of any group of human beings who are living together as a society, it is necessary to analyze the forces of unity and disunity, factors which on the one hand promote the social unity of the community, and those which on the other hand tend to break the society apart. In studying the social life of a society especial attention is usually given to groupings, because, due to the inherent and acquired personal differences among its members, a community rarely exists without some sort of internal organization which assigns to the several members of the community functions more or less suited to their social abilities.

One of the major objectives of the present investigation was to discover and analyze the social factors in Carib community life. Among the Caribs, whose culture generally lacks explicitness, the underlying factors of social organization are at some points far from obvious. Consequently, the most useful method seemed to be to examine all sides of community life from their social aspects. First, we shall attempt a general analysis of Carib society, following which will be presented a more or less intensive analysis of the social life of a single typical community, Sawari settlement.

Groupings in Carib Society. The most obvious facts of social grouping among the Caribs, facts which are apparent to the casual observer, are that the people are organized into individual families or households, and that these families are in turn grouped into small communities, which we shall call settlements or villages. Upon further examination, four additional types of grouping may be discerned, the kin, the extended family, the group of friends, and the kanaima cult. Six types of grouping, therefore, furnish the basis of the social organization: the family or household, the kin, the settlement, the extended family, the group of friends, and the kanaima cult. The factors of sex and age play varying roles in these groupings.

It is now proposed briefly to discuss each of these types of group from the following points of view: (a) factors determining membership in the group; (b) social functions of the group; (c) factors tending toward disorganization of the group.

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794 mal society. The motivations for joining the kanaima cult are, apparently, first, failure to obtain redress for a wrong in other ways, and second, generally antisocial attitude. Membership is limited to the male sex. It is seldom that a kanaima reforms and gives up the life.

571 **Summary.** Six types of social grouping have been described. The first five types, immediate family, kin, extended family, friendship group, and settlement, may be considered basic elements of the social structure. The kanaima cult is a specialized grouping not directly connected with the social organization of the community as a whole.

Two factors, which are present in all societies, namely, age and sex, further affect the social life of a Carib community. Here, as elsewhere, among human societies, are infants, adolescents, middle aged adults, and old people. Here also are males and females. However, no groupings in Carib life depend primarily upon either of these factors. Both sexes and all ages are present in the immediate family, kin, extended family, and settlement, although in each of these groups the degree of cooperation between specified individuals is positively correlated with the degree of similarity between them in regard to age or sex or both. Friendship groups are usually composed of individuals of the same sex and the same generation. The kanaima cult is composed only of men, although of varying ages above that of maturity.

565 It may be asked why headmen, priests, and sorcerers, respectively, are not assigned to special groups. Although each of these officials is distinguished from the commonality on account of his position, each is a lone wolf in his official capacity, requiring in his functions the assistance of no organized group of colleagues. Furthermore, each settlement has only one headman and usually not more than three priests and sorcerers, so that a local basis for grouping is absent. In the frame of Carib society as a whole, these three officials may be said to belong respectively to three professional classes, but these classes are not in any sense functioning social groups because the members, although fulfilling similar individual functions, do not cooperate in them.

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has lived here, while a short distance to the southeast of the present clearing lies his abandoned field. Only about a year previously did the other households which now occupy the clearing join with Cook, cooperate in the clearing of the present immense field, and take up their residences there. In this field each man has his own plot of ground, which his household cares for. But at the present time Cook's clearing has hardly yet become stabilized. The grouping of the houses here reflects no social division within the group itself, which is consistent with the fact that Cook's influence is supreme. Here the divisive factors of blood and personal prestige, which tended to set David's group apart from Miller's group in the latter's clearing, have practically no force. Cook's house, in the southeast corner of the clearing, happens to be the one which he has occupied for some years. The dwellings of the other households are scattered across the center of the field in easy access to their respective agricultural plots.

Our examination of household groupings thus far has given hints of divisive factors arising on the basis of blood, personality, and personal ability. The settlement itself is split into two large local groups, centering respectively about Miller and Cook. Miller's local group is further divided into two sections which center respectively about Miller and David. In each of these groupings there is a high correlation between the personal influence of the dominant character, his blood relationship with the members of the group centering about him, and the spatial grouping of the households concerned.

There remains the household of Edwin, located as can be seen in Figure 9, about midway between the settlements of Miller and Cook. Oddly enough, Edwin's social position with reference to the two major local groups correlates remarkably with his spatial relation to them. Edwin is approximately the same age as Miller and Cook. He is a large man, easy going, capable, but given to excessive intoxication when the occasion presents itself. His wife, Lulu, is only slightly younger than he and has borne all his five children. Her blood relatives live at Towakaima and Sineparu. The oldest boy, Peter, is probably about sixteen years of age and is looking about for a wife. The oldest of the other four children is about eleven. Although Edwin is a distant parallel cousin of Miller, he divides his contacts equally between the latter

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592 571 and Cook. During the antagonism between the Miller and Cook settlements, Edwin visited both unconcernedly. At one time he assisted John Cook for several days in the making of a cassiri kanu, at another time he assisted Miller in the construction of a woodskin boat. In the meantime, he went about his own hunting and continued with the clearing of a field for his own exclusive use without apparently becoming embroiled in the disputes which engaged the attention of the Miller and Cook groups. Edwin's household, therefore, seems to be a unit to itself, friendly with all, but taking no sides in group rivalries. The blood ties of this household with that of Miller are apparently, as in the case of John, too remote to have much influence. Here again the personal factor seems to be present. Edwin is a man of the same age group as Miller and Cook; he feels capable of handling his affairs on the basis of age and experience, without the direction of either Miller or Cook. But, being easy-going by nature, he lacks qualities of leadership and responsibility which would draw about him a group of satellites, as has happened in the cases of Miller and Cook.

From our survey of household groupings the following factors affecting the organization of the settlement have emerged: personality, personal ability (including physical strength, mental alertness), blood relationship, and marriage relationship.

421 **Economic Factors in the Social Life.** The general rule regarding the ownership of property is strictly individualistic. A man owns his field, house, hunting and fishing equipment, canoes, ornaments, tools, raiment, and the game that he has bagged. A woman owns the implements which she uses in the field and house, the pottery, the basketry (which is made, however, by the men), her clothing, ornaments, and accessories. All personal property is held by individuals. Even children are the owners of ornaments, toys, and trinkets, and this ownership is respected by the elders, as I have discovered in acquiring specimens. In spite of individualism in ownership there is in fact a certain communism in practise. That is, members of the same household and settlement may borrow goods from each other with the owner's permission. Borrowing without permission is considered theft. (See Section on Crime and Punishment.) This communism of use means that the members of a larger household have a greater variety of goods at their command than the members of a small household, even though the

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602 population are related in some manner.

In addition to a generational continuity of the human group
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591 involved, there has also been a continuity in interaction. That is,
166 during the period under consideration, material exchanges and the migrations of individuals among Carib settlements in the Upper Barama area have been more pronounced than such exchanges with outside settlements. This permits the Upper Barama Caribs to be
[121] identified as a single adapting population for the purpose of this
*177 analysis (Rappaport 1969:184). However, the frequency of contacts
361 and the nature of movements among settlements have changed. Specifically, small, dispersed, semi-nomadic social units have given way to nucleations around centers where external resources are available. In this context, different settlement patterns would appear to represent different adaptations devised by the same group of people
[161] to meet differing conditions. Differing rates of population growth also would appear to be the result of the changing circumstances.

Settlement Pattern

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361 During 1932-33, Gillin estimates a Carib population of not more than 600 for the entire Barama River area (1936:113). In all, thirty-three settlements were located along the Barama River (1936: 110). About ten[3] were above Towakaima (see Figure 6). This includes the Savari[4] settlement for which more complete population data were
175 recorded. The population for this settlement consisted of forty-seven
161 individuals (1936:110). Since the primary adaptation was to the rain
162 forest, there were no reported concentrations of population in the
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[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 40]

*177 438 439 Since Gillin's time, miners, missionaries, and government projects have all combined to provide this population with market opportunities. Wages and external resources have come to be central in the problem of making a living in the bush. However, Caribs exercise little or no control of the market opportunities, nor do they have the means to travel to reach other markets. To this extent, the Upper Barama River Caribs have remained detached from managerial or entrepreneurial roles in their participation in regional exchanges. The conveyance of market opportunities into the Upper Barama River area has remained highly *177 437 439 dependent on non-Carib middlemen. There are no intervening regional market networks with adjacent populations. Rather, exchange is directly with individuals who have come into the frontier from a center of commercial and governmental activity, Georgetown, and bring with them transportation and communication ties back to this center. With the considerable flux of individual middlemen and the market opportunities they have brought into the area, specific sources of regional trade have been marked by their impermanence. Thus, the Upper Barama River Caribs have increasingly become a population encapsulated within and dependent upon the national society.

*177 43 The relationships Caribs have had with middlemen reflect the highly fluid nature of regional exchanges. In the face of the obviously uncertain markets conveyed by the porknockers, Caribs remained uncommitted to these resource opportunities. In contrast, the men from the mining companies stood in a position of increased resource demand and control of the regional transportation and communication networks. [571] The more established nature of mining company enterprises promoted

patron-client relationships in which Carib clients could also make limited demands on their employer. Generally, the degree to which these new opportunities were available to Caribs was reflected in a neglect of bush agriculture. Over time, this neglect proved to be precarious. These markets dissolved with the cessation of gold mining, leaving former miners and their families with no immediate relationship to a source of provisions. The new governmental offices, including that of Amerindian Captain, and officeholders do not have a record of sufficient permanence and assured access to stores of external resources to aggregate around them individuals in client positions. Although prominent among the new markets, cash crops have not replaced subsistence crops to any substantial degree. During the period of field work, no Carib was dependent for survival on the cash crops he grew. Rather, this activity was pursued in addition to subsistence farming and the income was used as pocket cash to make purchases among the commercial items at the trade store. In this manner, Caribs were not critically dependent on networks for the regional exchange of such refractory commodities as agricultural produce.

In short, regional markets have been impermanent. Even so, they have made available wages and external resources that have attracted the participation of the Carib population. Caribs can take part in these market opportunities and hedge against their insecurity only in so far as they maintain some level of bush agriculture. This is possible without restriction, as throughout the various human occupations in the Upper Barama River drainage basin, there is no

175 342 (Gillin 1936:31-9). As a house became dilapidated, it would be used for cooking or storage purposes, and a new one built to support the hammocks of the various members of the household.

175 584 [582] Preparatory to a marriage, a young man was required to cut a field and build a house nearby and pass a hunting test given by the bride's family. This appears to have been a formality that finalized an agreeable relationship among all concerned (Gillin 1936:74-75).

175 591 [606] [851] At first, the young husband resided with his wife's family. During this time he cooperated actively with his wife's father and other male relatives still in the household. Expressive of the temporary nature of the extension of the family, the young man rendered his father-in-law deference, usually not talking to him directly but through his daughter. This period of matrilocal residence generally would end soon after the birth of a first child (Gillin 1936:97). The newly established household was then an autonomous unit.

175 406 571 621 [462] As for the cooperation among households, this principally involved men's activities, farm cutting, hunting, canoe building, house constructing, and the like. In these instances, cooperation is not necessary, but rather expedient. As a result, patterns of cooperation lacked permanence and explicitness. Friendships among men seem to have been the basis for recruiting work partners. Women cooperated as well, but their friendships had no consequences in social organization (Gillin 1936:136). The adult men moved their households about freely to enter into associations with other men from households in the vicinity. In general, cooperation developed among "brothers," actual siblings and parallel cousins (Gillin 1936:97), and these kinsmen tended to settle near each other.

175 406 593 605 [591]

2: Adams E-4,5 (1970-1971) 1973 SR9 Carib SR9
(1932-1971) Barama River

175 571 159 621 John Cook was probably the same age as Miller (Gillin 1936:125-8). Several years ago upon the death of his first wife, he was attracted to Savari out of his friendship with Miller. He consequently took a kinswoman of Miller as a wife.[1] As Cook became established in Savari, he attracted men in his own right. As he did so, his friendship and cooperation with Miller waned. Expressive of this rift is their discontinued participation in a common cassiri spree,[2] the one form of public activity including ritualized behavior. During Gillin's visit, Cook's group ceased attending Miller's cassiri sprees but held their own. In addition to Cook, there were three men in his clearing. These included his half-brother Daniel and his half-sister's husband, Henry Daniel, who is also a fourth brother to the group of three in Miller's clearing. Also, a man named John, about thirty-five, had moved his household to Savari on the basis of his friendship with Cook. All of these men together had cleared a field and had the use of respective plots in it.

The third clearing was that of a single man, Edwin, who was also a contemporary of Miller and Cook. Edwin farmed by himself. However, indifferent to the enmity between Miller and Cook, he assisted both of them at times with other tasks such as constructing a cassiri kanu and a woodskin boat. Gillin suggests that Edwin's failure to attract a group around him is due to his lack of leadership qualities (1936:127-128). It is also clear that Edwin at this point in time does not have the same advantage as Miller and Cook regarding marriageable female relatives with whom to negotiate these satellites. His oldest child was a male about sixteen. His other children were daughters under twelve years of age.

Among the other men in these households of miners, those not employed are either old enough to be retired from this work or too young to have begun an employment career. Thus, a household included up to three adult men in different stages of involvement with employment opportunities. The trans-generational recruitment of work partners is clear. As a pattern, the older men who had been employed for a substantial number of years attracted to their households sons and sons-in-law. The older men would seek employment on their behalf. An exception to father-son and father-son-in-law recruitment pattern is the man with a work partnership with his wife's younger brother (cluster 8 in Figure 12). In this case the age difference is still apparent. As a pattern, the younger partner was brought into an employment opportunity at an age when he was a dependent in an established miner's household. The younger man became another link in the client relationship the older man had established with Baird. Any further elaboration with regard to the pattern of life cycles of men or households under the circumstances of employment in mining was terminated with the cessation of In Time mine in 1969.

In any case, this household organization was not dictated by the nature of the work, but rather by the manner of securing and maintaining the work.[3] As is abundantly apparent from Figure 12, Baird's workers were close kinsmen. Nevertheless, with the limited number of jobs available, there was no opportunity for these men to use kinship ties to form any independent corporate organization. Rather, employment opportunities in the mining tended to eliminate economic cooperation between households by introducing an external broker between them.

*177 during the afternoon. The families of the working men would arrive
476 and take part in this cassiri spree. No residue of obligations per-
464 sisted from these group work days.

[622] Also, the Captain used his income and agricultural resources to
*177 recruit men for projects he undertook as officeholder. At times, men
464 were gathered to assist in cutting fields for Carib households newly moving to the Air Strip. The first self-help project in October 1970 involved building school desks and benches. A carpenter who had come to make repairs on the government residence houses stayed on to provide designs for the furniture and to supervise their construction. Every weekday morning for about three weeks, several men would turn out for this work. The second self-help project occurred in January 1971. The abandoned missionary lands were cleared of secondary bush for farms. During the mornings, over a period of nineteen days, the Captain and several other men cut down bush. At the beginning, one man who is a particularly good hunter was provided ammunition to hunt for the rest. Also, the Captain distributed other food from his farm and the trade store. In each case, specific work groups lacked per-
[571] manence. The composition of groups changed every day of these projects. In all cases, the men received some immediate return for their participation.

Smaller groups of men have also been employed by other Caribs. Groups of men from the same residential clearing as well as individuals have been paid to do other tasks, including building houses and cassiri kanus, and clearing fields. Brothers, sons, fathers, fathers-in-law, and sons-in-law not sharing residence have been paid to do this work.

others. That is, this population is encapsulated relative to access to regional transportation and communication and control of market opportunities. Limited regional markets including employment have been conveyed into the Upper Barama River area by non-Carib middlemen. As a consequence, a limited number of Caribs have become clients to middlemen patrons and have brought their sons or sons-in-law into an employment opportunity. In this manner, extended household organization in which a son or son-in-law and his family remain with the parents is one pattern of organization that is evident among the Upper Barama River Caribs.

There is one further note to make on the social organization of the Upper Barama River Caribs. That is, the instrumentality of the one type of local communication event has changed relative to shifts in the boundaries of the resource-sharing social unit. The cassiri spree provides for the institutionalized interaction of individuals through songs, dances, and other encounters. As Gillin observed it (1936:60-70,137-139), a spree was held by one man but participation tended to include the residents of one settlement, although strangers were usually welcomed. A program of activities was continued for several days until the supply of cassiri was exhausted. During this time individuals engaged in a formalized manner related in different ways to the people they saw almost continually. In addition, the event itself expressed the solidarity of the people participating. Less than total participation of the residents in a settlement was indicative of the strained relationships which were a prelude to the relocation of households.

2: Adams E-4,5 (1970-1971) 1973 SR9 Carib SR9
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VI

CONCLUSIONS

In the previous chapters, attention has been given to the correlations over time of resources available for exploitation and the size and organization of a single population. The economic and reproductive adjustments of the Upper Barama River Caribs have been investigated. In their specific pathway from relative isolation in the rain forest into a national political economy, social organization and population size have been related to resource development. As this population has been centralized by common participation in networks of regional exchange, the household has emerged as the resource-sharing social unit. Ties of general reciprocity with a wider kinship group have tended to be dissolved. Another type of organization which has emerged to consolidate advantage in the regional economy has been client relationships with a middleman patron. In addition, external sources of food and clothing and medical care have tended to override relationships between population size and adaptation to local rain forest resources. An accelerating rate of population growth is currently evident among the Upper Barama River Caribs. In short, this population has evidenced changes in organization and increased population size under the conditions of its national integration.

Adapting to the rain forest, the Upper Barama River Carib population participated in the direct organism-to-organism cycling of